



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
St. Louis District®

# News Release

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## Media Advisory

What: Grand Opening of National Great Rivers Museum  
Where: Melvin Price Locks and Dam in Alton, Ill.  
When: October 15, 2003, 10 a.m.

### National Great Rivers Museum's Grand Opening

St. Louis -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, joins the Meeting of the Rivers Foundation in announcing the Grand Opening of the National Great Rivers Museum, Regional Visitor Center at the Melvin Price Locks and Dam, Alton, Ill.

U.S. Representative Jerry Costello, 12th District Illinois, Brig. Gen. Don T. Riley, Mississippi Valley Division Commander, and Col. C. Kevin Williams, St. Louis District Commander, will join Dale Chapman, Chairman of the Meeting of the Rivers Foundation on Wednesday, October 15 at 10:00 in a ceremony marking the Grand Opening of this exciting new facility. The public is invited to attend and tour the museum following ceremonial remarks and Congressman Costello leading the first group of school children through the new museum.

Each year millions of visitors travel to the Mississippi River to learn about its history and its impact on our nation. The National Great Rivers Museum is dedicated to telling the story of the Mississippi – its history, culture, ecology, and its evolving role as a transportation corridor, providing a unique opportunity to tell the River's story in a comprehensive, meaningful and relevant way.

"This is one of only nine Regional Visitor Centers, the crown jewels, throughout the Corps of Engineers," said Colonel C. Kevin Williams, Commander of the St. Louis District Corps of Engineers. "We are proud to be able to bring the story of the Mississippi River to life through the hands-on interactive exhibits throughout this facility," Williams said.

The National Great Rivers Museum, managed by the Corps of Engineers, has been a unique project for the agency, in that it has been developed with both public and private funding. "This project has brought together federal and state agencies and private organizations to work cooperatively to tell the story of the river," Williams said.

The Corps entered into agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to provide both technical input and funding for the project.

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## MUSEUM 2-2-2

The Meeting of the Rivers Foundation, a private not-for-profit, was developed to assist the Corps in raising private funding for the exhibit development and endowment. "The museum will provide the opportunity to tell the story of the river from the multiple perspectives of industry, environment, and recreation", said Jack Jacoby, President of the Meeting of the Rivers Foundation. "The museum will be a great opportunity to educate people, especially kids, about the river. The foundation has been proud to be a part of this exciting project," Jacoby said.

Covering more than 7,000 square feet of indoor space, the museum features displays that examine the river's cultural and natural history, as well as how the river "works." Visitors have the opportunity to experience being a towboat pilot or examining the relationship of the Mississippi watershed to their livelihoods. The facility also includes a theater presentation, "Reflections: Voices of the Mississippi", which will be completed within the next few months.

The multi-purpose room of the facility houses a Distance Learning Classroom, a contribution of the Southwestern Illinois Higher Education Consortium, of which Lewis and Clark Community College is a member and was the main driver behind acquiring this classroom for the museum. The classroom has been active for the past year, allowing students from all over the Mississippi watershed to connect and learn about the river together. "The Distance Learning Classroom provides a neutral forum for bringing people together with varying opinions for important discussions on the future of the river," said Dr. Dale Chapman, President of Lewis and Clark Community College.

The public will have the opportunity to tour the Melvin Price Locks and Dam following the Grand Opening Ceremony. Exhibits by partnering agencies and organizations will be on display outside the museum. The Corps also invites the public to tour its working towboats, which will be docked just below the lock and dam.

Media will have the opportunity to interview individuals who have played a significant role in the development of this project, immediately following the ceremony. These interviews will be held inside the museum's theater.

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